

Daniel 7 John Karmelich

There are 2 lessons for Daniel Chapter 7. This is lesson **1**.

1. OK folks, its time for the weird stuff! ☺
 - a) Chapters 1-6 of Daniel tell stories. Chapters 7-12 deal with future prophecies.
 - b) To those of you who are new or have a tough time with Bible prophecy, I hope and pray to shed some light and make it easy for you to follow.
2. Before we start Chapter 7, let's start with a few basic Bible rules that may help:
 - a) First, God uses word-pictures. If you have ever taken one of those "increase your memory" classes, they encourage you to make word-pictures to remember the facts and names you wish to learn. They don't know it, but that's biblical!
 - b) Another example is your computer. When we want to use the word processor, we "click" on the little button that is associated with Microsoft Word, or whatever program we are using. This is a short cut instead of telling the computer "please start the word processing program". They do this because we remember visual-picture better than we remember long commands.
 - c) God understands this. This is why the Bible is filled with word-pictures. God does this to help us *remember* the information he wants to convey.
 - d) In today's lesson, we are going to read about 4 animal-beasts. We'll first read about those 4 beasts in Verses 2-7. It isn't until we get to verse 17 we learn that the 4 beasts represent 4 kings, or 4 kingdoms. So why didn't God just bluntly say in the beginning that there would be 4 kings, and here is what they are like?
 - a) The answer is word-pictures. These word-pictures help us to *identify* what these king(dom)s will be like because they will have characteristics like these four animal-beasts.
 - e) A second important rule is to "Interpret the Bible *with* the Bible". The Bible is very consistent in its word-usage over the 66 books that compose the Bible.
 - i) Tonight's lesson ties to many verses in Revelation.
 - ii) The next few chapters of Daniel are often called "The Little Revelation" because it tells some of the same prophetic stories of the Book of Revelation with an Old Testament viewpoint. We'll explain it as we go.
 - a) There are *many* quotes in Revelation from the Book of Daniel. We'll try to tie those quotes together as we go.
 - b) A common Bible expression is: The Old Testament is *explained* in the New Testament. The Book of Revelation will expand some of the Bible prophecies we read in Daniel.
3. Before I jump in the text, let me give some other applications:
 - a) About Thirty percent of the Bible is future-prophecy.
 - i) God does this as validation. God claims that this book, and no other book is the Word of God. The only way I know to write a book and claim inspiration from God and *prove it* is to write history in advance.
 - b) God wants us to know the future.
 - i) A large chunk of Bible prophecy has already happened. When we get into Chapter 8 and 11 of the Book of Daniel, we will deal with prophecy that has already happened. The accuracy of Daniel's predictions are have been supported by history.
 - ii) Tonight, a lot of the Chapter 7 has *not* happened yet. Therefore, it is a little "fuzzy". Some of the interpretations I present are common *speculations* on *how* this is going to play out.

- c) If you only remember one thing about end-time prophecy, remember this:
 - a) A lot of bad things will happen. Jesus & his followers win in the end!
 - b) That is something to keep that in mind as you are going through the difficult times. It is all temporary. Read the end of the book, we win!
 - d) Another practical thing to remember: God knows all things.
 - i) Our God is perfect. A perfect God knows all things. A perfect God can not learn anything. God is not an old man sitting on a chair. God *created* time. God exists outside of time as we know it.
 - a) The best analogy I know is to think of a parade. If you watch a parade from the sidewalk, you see it passing by.
 - b) If you watch the same parade from a helicopter, you can see the whole thing front to end all at once. With a good pair of binoculars, you can focus on any one scene at any one time. That is how God sees the world. He sees it from the eternal perspective.
 - (1) When God answers your prayers, he already knows in advance the outcome. He “enters” time at that point to intervene.
 - e) Last thing to think about: If God is perfect and God knows all things and God loves and cares for you as the Bible teaches, why do we worry?
 - i) I emphasize the “we”, as I’m guilty as well.
 - ii) As you read future prophecy, remind yourself that God is in control. God allows horrible events/people to exist because 1) the result of sin in the world (i.e., God allows “free will”, and 2) it draws people closer to him.
 - iii) I once heard the analogy that when you send your kids off to college, you only give them money a little at time, so that way, you always hear from them! ☺
 - a) God, in a sense, works the same way. He has designed the world that for our own peace-of-mind we need to stay in close contact with him.
4. OK, on to Daniel, Chapter 7: Verse 1: In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.
- a) Remember that Chapters 1 through 6 span the life of Daniel. Chapter 1 occurred when Daniel was a teenager. By the end of Chapter 6, Daniel was in his 80’s. We know this historically because we have outside records of all the kings who lived during the time of Daniel’s lifetime.
 - b) If you remember King Belshazzar, he was the guy who saw the “writing on the wall”.
 - i) King Belshazzar was killed at the end of Chapter 5.
 - ii) History taught us it was near the end of his 3rd year in power.
 - iii) This vision, beginning in Verse 1 takes place in the first year of King Belshazzar.
 - iv) So again, we are now backtracking in time for Daniel to record this vision.
 - c) Reading this a few times, you get the impression Daniel wrote down the vision, and then dictated the message to the writer. The chapter reads in 3rd person. I suspect Daniel wrote the book through a scribe who took dictation from Daniel.
 - d) I suspect Daniel understood the fact that this is not a “bad pepperoni pizza dream”. ☺
 - i) He knew the difference between a Godly vision and a weird dream.
 - ii) Another “clue” is the language this chapter is written in.
 - iii) Chapters 2-7 are written in a language known as Aramaic. It is a “cousin” language to Hebrew, and was the “business-language” of the greater area that most people knew, such as English has become the business-language of the world today.

- iv) Some commentators speculate the Chapters 2-7 are “messages to and from the Gentiles” as the language is in Aramaic and not in Hebrew. It is as if God wanted to show that these chapters, and the visions and lessons from these chapters are a special focus for the non-Hebrew world as well as the Hebrew.
5. Verse 2: Daniel said: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. ³ Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.
- a) OK, here comes the word-pictures. Let's begin our Bible glossary and see if we can put these together.
 - i) Let's start with the term “four winds”. The word picture is the wind that blows in all 4 directions, north, east, south and west.
 - a) The word “wind” in Hebrew is the same root-word where we get the word “Spirit”. It also means breadth, as is breathing. Jesus himself associates the wind with the Holy Spirit.
 - b) Jesus said, “And he (God) will send his angels and gather his elect (believers) from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. (Mark 13:27, NIV)
 - c) Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” (In this text, it is a prophecy of the Holy Spirit reviving the dead “bones” of the nation of Israel. (Ezekiel 37:9, NIV)
 - ii) Now we know the “winds”, biblically, represent the Spirit of God, working.
 - b) Next word-picture in this sentence is the “Great Sea”
 - i) Most believe “The Great Sea” refers the Mediterranean Sea.
 - a) In the Book of Numbers, when God is describing the boundaries of the Nation of Israel, he uses “The Great Sea” to refer to the Mediterranean Sea. (Reference: Numbers 34:6-7, as an example.)
 - b) Most of the “Great Sea” references in the Old Testament are about the Mediterranean Sea.
 - ii) Others think “The Great Sea” refers to “world-of-people-in general” (i.e., “the Gentile Nations, which is simply everybody who is not an Israelite.):
 - a) The Book of Revelation, as we'll discover tonight, ties in tightly with Daniel. In Revelation, an angel explains the word “sea”. Both this vision and Revelation deal with end-time visions.
 - (1) Then the angel said to me (John), “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. (Revelation 17:15, NIV).
 - (2) So others see the tie-in between “The Great Sea” of Daniel and this verse in Revelation.
 - c) Last, we have four great beasts. This one is directly explained in this chapter.
 - i) Verse 17 says, “The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth.” Some translations say “kings” versus kingdoms.
 - d) The conclusion is that we are not looking at literal animal-beasts coming out the sea to rule as kings. These are word-pictures.
 - i) A good Bible rule is: If the *plain text* makes *perfect* sense, seek no other sense.
 - ii) Since the plain text, (i.e., literal animals as kings) doesn't make perfect sense, we know (along with the interpretation of Verse 17) that we are dealing with word-pictures. If you understand that, you are ready for the rest of Daniel! ☺

- e) So let's tie this together. Daniel tells of a vision of 4 kings who are "beasts". These beasts are ordained by God (i.e. "four winds"), rising from somewhere near the Mediterranean ("Great Sea") for a purpose. Why doesn't God just bluntly say, "Four bad kings will arise and save a lot of trouble?"
 - i) Again, the word-pictures are for us to learn. These men did (or will) do terrible things, kill people and destroy things. The same way we might describe an evil person as "a beast". It is a word-picture for us to visualize these four kings.
- 6. With that lengthy explanation, ☺ let's take on the first beast, Verse 4: "The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it."
 - a) I have read or listened to *lots* of commentaries on these 4 beasts. I have found they fall into two general categories.
 - i) The first is what I'll call "the "classical" interpretation.
 - a) Most conservative seminaries teach this view as the correct view.
 - ii) The second is what I'll call the "futuristic" interpretation.
 - a) Many good Bible scholars (Ray Steadman, Dr. David Hocking, Hal Lindsey, et.al.) see all four of these beasts as occurring in modern times or futuristic.
 - iii) Also consider the possibility of a double-fulfillment. The Bible is *full* of double-fulfillment prophecies. God will often have a short-term fulfillment to validate the prophet as being authentic, and have a 2nd much-longer-term fulfillment that may have to do with some end-time event.
 - iv) To save paper, I'll just use the term "classical" and "futuristic" from here on.
 - b) This beast is like a lion-with-eagle's wings -> wings torn off -> stood like man -> given a human heart.
 - i) "Classical" – This refers to King Nebuchadnezzar. Remember that Daniel worked with this man for years, so he would know the details intimately.
 - a) Remember that King Nebuchadnezzar was considered the greatest of all kings in the 4-metal statue in Chapter 2. He was the head-of-gold.
 - (1) The lion is the "king" of the beasts.
 - (2) The eagle (eagle-wings) is the king of the birds.
 - (3) The combination lion-with-eagle's wings would be unstoppable.
 - b) The text says, "(it) had its wings plucked out". This would refer to when Nebuchadnezzar had the "7-cow-years" and lost his power (Daniel 4).
 - c) The text says "(it) stood like a man/given a new heart" would refer to when Nebuchadnezzar regained his power again at the end of Daniel 4.
 - (1) Whenever someone is born-again in the Bible, the Bible never describes him as having a "repaired" heart. It is always a new heart. God describes our heart as curable.
 - (a) Nebuchadnezzar paid homage to Daniel's God as "the" God. I believed he was "saved" at that point in his life.
 - (b) "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:26, NIV)
 - ii) "Modern": This may refer to an end time beast.
 - a) Many commentators believe it might refer to England.
 - (1) England has been associated with the "lion" since its inception.

- (2) The “eagle’s wings plucked off” refer to the decline of the English Empire.
 - (a) The “eagle” is often associated with USA. Could the American Revolution refer to the loss of wings?
 - (b) England’s “new heart” may refer to the *culture* that England has brought to the world, since the decline of the British Empire.
 - b) Other commentators see all four beasts as futuristic and occurring during the end-times. Britain is just one example of the modern view.
 - c) To justify the modern view, one has to read ahead to verse 12:
 - (1) “The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.” (Daniel 7:12, NIV)
 - (2) Verse 12 implies that these 4 beasts, lose their power, but they are still “alive” when the “4th great horrible beast” is still around.
 - d) If all of this sounds weird, hang in there, it gets better! ☺
- 7. Verse 5: And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, ‘Get up and eat your fill of flesh!’
 - a) “Classical” – This refers to the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - i) “The bear was raised up on one side”. Picture a bear raised on its two left paws or its two right paws. It leans. Thus interpreters see this bear as being “supported”. The Medo-Persian Empire was predominantly one nation (Medes) but also supported by another (Persians).
 - ii) A bear moves slowly, but is big and attacks anything it wants.
 - a) The Medo-Persian army was large. It moved slowly and grew slowly.
 - iii) “Three ribs”. A rib, Biblically, is associated with a man. Think of the rib taken from Adam to make Eve (Genesis 2:22).
 - a) The Medo-Persian Empire conquered 3 other major empires that existed at that time: The Babylonian Empire, the Egyptian Empire and the Libyan Empire. (I’m using the English-country equivalent names here.)
 - b) “Modern” – This may refer to Russia.
 - i) The argument is, that there is no historical evidence that Medo Persia ever had the bear as its symbol.
 - ii) Russia has *always* been associated with “the bear” through its modern history.
 - a) Russia, like Britain, has been a modern power, and may be in the end-times. Russia has militarily supported the enemies of Israel, which has end-time implications.
 - iii) The bear “propped up on one side” may mean it is weak. Russia is not the dominant country it once was militarily. The “Soviet Empire” no longer exists.
 - iv) The modern arguments have more support when we get to Verses 11 and 12.
 - a) This is because Verses 11 and 12 says that these “beasts” will still exist even after their kingdoms are taken away. The analogy is of a “has-been” king or a “has-been” country.
 - v) The “classical” view argues that these animals are “word-pictures”. Just because the bear is associated with Russia has nothing to do with this prophecy. Daniel states that this 2nd beast acts “like a bear”.

8. Verse 6: "After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.
- a) Ok, here we have a four-headed leopard with bird's wings.
 - b) "Classical" – This refers to the Grecian Empire.
 - i) Back in Chapter 2, Daniel described a 4 metal-statue. Each metal was inferior to the one directly above it. We are now on the 3rd beast. The "classical" interpretation therefore, is that it is associated with the 3rd metal from Chapter 2.
 - a) The leopard is an inferior predator to the lion and the bear. The wings of this leopard are all inferior to the eagle's wings of the first beast.
 - ii) What's the word-picture of a leopard? Speed! They are known as being the fastest land animal on earth.
 - iii) The Grecian Empire was known for the *speed* in which it conquered the world. The leader was Alexander the Great. In *two years* he wept because there was no more worlds left to conquer.
 - a) Alexander the Great was supported by *four generals*. When Alexander died, the Empire was split into four parts, with one general per part.
 - b) The Empire remained in four parts, despite efforts to combine and attack each other until the Roman Empire.
 - c) "Modern" – The opinion varies. Many believe this is "undisclosed" as of yet.
 - i) Remember that the modern application sees these 4 beasts as all existing simultaneously during the end-times. The "end times" by the way, refers to the 7-year period before the return of Jesus Christ to the earth.
 - ii) Dr. David Hocking speculated it might be some sort of confederation of Arab nations. That combined power could exist. Maybe there are 4 main leaders.
9. OK, it's half time. Let's take a breather. Everybody relax for a moment and lets stand back and take this all in. ☺
- a) So far we have 3 beasts. Some see it as historical empires leading up to the 4th empire, which we'll discover is the Roman Empire and/or a *revived* Roman Empire.
 - b) Others see it all futuristic, or as a double-fulfillment. We'll read in a few verses that the end-times will have a group of 10 kings. These 3 king(dom)s may be part of the 10.
 - c) Looking at the chapter as a whole, we only have 4 verses covering these 3 king(dom)s.
 - i) The remainder focuses on 1) the 4th beast: and 2) the return of Jesus around the time era of this 4th beast and God's ultimate victory over this beast.
 - ii) Remember what I said earlier to sum up all of end-times: "A lot of people get hurt and killed, a lot of things get destroyed, but in the end, the Christians win"
 - a) The rest of Daniel, is basically the details. ☺
 - iii) Because these 3 animal/beasts are not *directly* interpreted for us, there is room for speculation. Because this whole-chapter focuses on end-times, I do believe there is merit for the "its all end-time stuff". Because the end-times hasn't happened yet, the vision is vague to our understanding.
 - iv) In the second half of this chapter, we are going to get some more clues that all four beasts are futuristic.
 - a) Remember that when Daniel wrote this, the Babylonian Empire had already existed and was coming to a close. That appears to be a contradiction to the verses in this chapter that argue that this is all futuristic.

- b) To give you a preview of next week, look at Verse 17 of this chapter:
 - (1) “The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth” (Daniel 7:17, NIV).
 - (2) The “will rise” indicates that all of this is futuristic, and yet the Babylonian kingdom already existed.
 - d) Even after you have studied all the prophetic passages of the Bible and put them all together, there is still some “vagueness” and room for speculation. Personally, I believe God keeps it a little vague for a number of reasons.
 - i) First, Satan believes the Bible is the Word of God too. His plan is to stop, or at least delay as long as possible, God’s redemptive plan. God keeps the end-time prophecy a little vague as to prevent Satan from understanding when all this is to exactly take place.
 - ii) Second, I believed God designed the “Post-Jesus” history as so *every* generation will think, “This is it. Jesus is coming back anyday now.” God *designed* it that way to keep us on our toes and keep our focus on Him.
 - a) One can look at any era of history and see “possible” interpretations for that era of time.
 - b) For example, during the “Dark ages/Middle Ages” the Roman Catholic Church went through a horrible period where many non-Catholic believers were tortured and killed. It was illegal own a Bible.
 - (1) I’m *sure* Protestants in those days saw the Catholic church as the “Evil Roman Revised Empire” as the *Roman Catholic Church*” and the end-times would happen any day now!”
 - c) Jesus said, “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. (Matthew 24:42-43, NIV)
 - iii) With that, do I believe *our* generation is the last generation? Yes, God commands us to live that way!
 - a) The *unique* aspect of our generation is the revival of modern Israel. The existence of that nation is part of the 7-year end time scenario. *That* gets me excited by itself.
 - e) OK, breaks over. Enough of the light and easy stuff. ☺ Let’s back to Daniel.
- 10. Verse 7: "After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast--terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.
 - a) The 4th Beast is one of the primary characters of this Bible.
 - b) The chapter spends more time talking about the 4th beast than the first 3 *combined*. Keep that in perspective as you study and think about the 4th beast.
 - c) The “Classical” view is that this refers to the Roman Empire.
 - i) The 4-metal statue in Daniel Chapter 2 had legs of iron. This was the 4th metal in the statue. In this vision, the 4th beast has *iron* teeth. Thus, the connection.
 - ii) Historically, the Roman Empire conquered the Grecian Empire. When the Roman Empire peaked about 100AD, all the land that touched the Mediterranean Sea was part of the Roman Empire. Thus another tie to “The Great Sea”.

- iii) The verse mentions there are ten horns. Back in the Chapter 2 vision, the metal statue had “toes of iron mixed with clay”. Many see the connection between the 10 kings in Verse 7 and the (assumed-10) toes of Chapter 2.
 - d) The “Modern” view is that this refers to a Revised Roman Empire.
 - i) We have established 4 great empires that existed since the time of Daniel.
 - a) First was the Babylonian Empire.
 - b) Second, this was conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - c) Third, this was conquered by the Grecian Empire
 - d) Fourth, this was conquered by the Roman Empire.
 - ii) So who conquered the Roman Empire? Nobody! It simply imploded on its own and separated into smaller and smaller factions.
 - a) There have not been any great empires since the Roman Empire.
 - b) Through the centuries many have *tried* to revive a Roman-type empire (Napoleon, Hitler, etc.), but none have been successful in uniting *all or most* of the territory that was once the Roman Empire.
 - iii) Thus, the modern view is that these four beasts are all tied to the end times.
 - a) Again, this verse mentions there are 10 horns in this 4th beast.
 - (1) Remember that in Verse 17 of this chapter, Daniel tells us that the 10 horns represent 10 kings. A horn is a word-picture for power. (Think of an animal with horns or antlers. It is their source of power.) Horns, biblically speak of power or leaders, and thus, here it refers to 10 kings.
 - b) The modern view is that in the end-times, there will be a 10 king or 10-nation confederacy that will dominate the whole world prior to the return of Jesus, as we’ll read in the next few verses.
 - (1) The *interesting* thing to speculate upon is that Europe is attempting to do something like that right now. Europe right now is attempting to unite under one government called “The European Union”. There is only *one currency for all of Europe*. In the history of Europe, this has never happened before.
 - (2) The Non-Biblical part so far, is that there are more than 10 nations that are part of the European Union. If this is “it”, we’ll just have to see how it evolves. Personally, I do believe the 10-nation confederacy will have its roots in the current European Union, but I’m not sure yet how it will play out.
 - c) For what it is worth, here is where the “classical” and “modern” views often come together. The classical view believes the 4th beast is the Roman Empire, but in the end times it *also* speaks of a “revived” Roman Empire consisting of 10 kings. The modern view also focuses on the Revised Roman Empire.
- 11. Verse 8: "While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.
 - a) Let me be blunt. What Daniel is speaking about here is the Antichrist.
 - b) Verse 8 teaches that out of this 10-horn/10-king confederacy will come *another* horn. This *new* horn/king is not one of the 10.
 - i) Notice it says a “little” horn will emerge. Most commentators believe the Antichrist will start off in the background and then rise above the others.

- c) We know this vision is futuristic, because nothing like this historically has happened that fits this vision. The vision will end with the return of the Jesus to conquer “this little horn”. Since that hasn’t happened it, it is futuristic.
 - d) OK, John, how do you know this is the Antichrist?
 - i) First of all, that is not my favorite title for this guy. The nickname Antichrist was coined in John’s 1st Letter (i.e., “1st John”). *That* John (not John the Baptist) is one of the 12 disciples, who wrote the Gospel of John, 1st, 2nd and 3rd John and the Book of Revelation. The Book of Revelation speaks in detail about the Antichrist yet John *never* once calls him the Antichrist in the Book of Revelation.
 - a) Personally, I prefer “the coming world leader”. Yet, the term Antichrist has stuck in our vocabulary, so I’ll use it.
 - e) Back to the question. How do I know from this verse that this is the guy?
 - i) The answer is the first few verses of Chapter 13 of Revelation.
 - ii) Chapter 13 *definitely* is talking about the Antichrist. The last sentence of the chapter gives the infamous “666” reference.
 - iii) Let’s read from Revelation 13: (My editorial comments in parenthesis)
 - a) ^{REV 13:1b} And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns (notice that!) and seven heads (we’ll get to that next week! ☺), with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ² The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. (Notice the connection!) The dragon (Satan) gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.
 - b) Continuing in Verse 4: ^{REV 13:4} Men worshiped the dragon (Satan) because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?” ^{REV 13:5} The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words (notice the connection between “boastful words” in Daniel 7:8 and here.)
 - c) To summarize: Both Daniel 7:8 and Revelation 13 speak of the Antichrist. There are so many connections between these two sections of the Bible that they *have* to go together.
 - f) I can’t leave this section without a comment about the “boastfulness”. There are references to the Antichrist all over the Bible, and not just in Revelation. There are references in Isaiah, Ezekiel, 1st Thessalonians and 1st John.
 - i) About the only thing that all the descriptions of the antichrist have in common is about his “big mouth”. I believe it was Chuck Missler who coined the nickname for the Antichrist “Mr. Big Mouth”. This is because all the Biblical references to the Antichrist talk about his boastfulness, especially in speaking out against God himself.
12. Verse 9: "As I looked, "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze.
- a) Well, as you can see, it’s not getting any easier. ☺ We’re dropping the Antichrist stuff for a few verses and moving on to a new vision. We’ll get back to “him” in 3 verses, which we will take on in next week’s lesson.
 - b) This is now talking about the throne of God. We know this because of references in Revelation and in Verse 10, it speaks of final-judgment. Satan doesn’t have the final word, God does.

- c) Before I do my usual verse overanalysis ☺, let's step back and look at the big-picture.
- i) Daniel just had this set of nightmares about these horrible beasts that will conquer the world. I'm sure it upset Daniel because, partially, due to the horror, and partially (speculating here) that Daniel was hoping the Messiah would come *now during his time* and not before these horrible beasts.
 - ii) Yet, Verse 9 and 10 interrupt these nightmares to give Daniel a pleasant dream.
 - iii) These 2 verses focus on the throne of God, giving judgment over the beast.
 - a) The important thing to remember is God will win in the end.
 - b) During *our* persecutions, during *our* suffering, during *our* misery we *need* to focus on the fact that God will win in the end. That is how we make it through those difficult times. Like Daniel, we need to keep our mind on the eternal perspective.
- d) Now back to vision of this verse. Don't panic, I'm here to explain the terms! ☺
- i) First we have "thrones". Notice the plural.
 - a) Let's get back to Revelation. You knew I would anyway! ☺
 - b) In Chapter 4 of Revelation, we have a vision of the throne of God.
 - (1) Surrounding the throne (God's) were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. (Rev. 4:4, NIV)
 - (2) The majority view among the commentators, including myself believe that the 24 "other" thrones represent the church.
 - (3) Thus the vision in heaven includes multiple "thrones". God said we will rule and reign with him.
 - c) A second view is that the multiple thrones refers to two thrones. In Verse 13 of this Chapter, there is a mention of a "coming king", a.k.a., Messiah, a.k.a., Jesus who will rule with God. This may be his throne.
- e) Back to the verse. Next we have the phrase "Ancient of Days". This refers to God the father. This title/nickname is only used in Daniel, and nowhere else in the Bible.
- i) We know it refers to the father because in Verse 13 of this chapter "The Son of Man", a title Jesus himself uses *of himself*, approaches "The Ancient of Days". The "Ancient of Days" then gives the Son of Man authority to rule over earth.
- f) Next comes the 2nd sentence of Verse 9: "His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze."
- i) This is *very* similar to Revelation Chapter 1, Verse 14-15:
 - a) "His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. (Rev. 1:14, NIV)
 - b) Now comes a problem. The "Ancient of Days" describes God-The-Father in the Book of Daniel
 - (1) Revelation 1:14, which is a very similar description is *definitely* talking about Jesus (Reference: Revelation 1:13).
 - (a) Yet the physical descriptions are almost identical.
 - (2) Most, if not all the commentaries I read "dance around" this question and hope it would go away. ☺
 - (3) It's difficult to reconcile, the best I can figure is that the Father *resembles* the Son, just as any natural-father resembles the son.
 - (4) We just have to take it at face value that these very similar descriptions are of God-the-Father in Daniel and God-the-Son in the Book of Revelation.

- ii) As to the interpretation of this verse, the “whiteness” represents purity. Even today the color white, pure-white represents purity.
 - iii) The references to “thrones of flames of fire” represents judgment. When you think of a throne with fire around it, the word-picture is judgment.
 - iv) The term “wheels ablaze” is similar to Ezekiel’s vision of the throne of God in the opening chapter of his book. In Ezekiel’s vision, the wheel’s are part of some sort of angelic like creatures that protect/surround the throne of God.
 - v) So lets put it all together. Daniel is looking at the throne of God. Daniel may even have been familiar with Ezekiel’s vision of the throne of God, and thus, knew the reference. If he didn’t, it was there for *our* reference.
 - vi) The important point is simply that Daniel understood he was no longer seeing visions of beasts, but Daniel is now seeing that of the throne of God.
13. Verse 10. (I promise this verse is much easier! ☺) A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.
- a) The “river of fire”, again a reference to judgment. Remember that the first part of this chapter focuses on this/these horrible beasts and the Antichrist. Thus, the necessity for the emphasis on God’s judgment.
 - b) Notice the 2nd sentence: “Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.”
 - i) The vision of Verses 9 and 10 is futuristic from the verses of Verses 4-8. We are now at Judgment Day. Again we’re back to Revelation.
 - a) Then I (John) looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.
(Rev. 5:5, NIV)
 - b) Thus, this vision may be of angels surrounding the throne.
 - c) Other commentators see the “thousands times ten thousands” being the believers along with the angels.
 - c) The last sentence of Verse 10 speaks of a judgment. In the New Testament, there are a number of judgments.
 - i) The saints (us) are judged & rewarded based on our deeds (See Revelation 11:18 and 22:12. Most commentators see this event taking place at the beginning of the 1,000-year millennium.
 - ii) Non-believers are judged at the end of the 1,000 millennium. They are judged based on their deeds. Their eternal salvation is determined in this judgment. (See Revelation 20:11-12).
 - iii) There is also the judgment of nations in Matthew 25:32-34.
 - a) “All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world
 - b) Some see this as the same judgment for believers, other see it as a separate judgment.
 - c) Some commentators believe the judgment of Verse 10 here in Daniel speaks of this judgment.

14. Well, I'm now on page 12, and I gave you enough to digest for one week. Next week, we'll finish Chapter 7, which focuses on the rise and fall of the Antichrist himself. Stay tuned! ☺
15. If I want you to just remember one or two things from this lesson, it is as follows:
- a) 1) God often uses word-pictures to describe future events in the Bible.
 - b) 2) Always interpret Scripture with Scripture. Looking elsewhere in the Bible will usually word-pictures that don't make sense by themselves.
 - c) 3) If the *plain* text makes perfect sense, seek no other sense.
If the *plain* text doesn't make perfect sense, then God may be using word-pictures.
 - d) Six months or six years from now, if I ask, "what does the Biblical idiom "the four winds" mean? Not only will you forget, but I probably will too. ☺ With these simple rules, one can do a little homework and figure out what God is trying to communicate to us. That is why learning how to study the Bible may be the most important part of this lesson. With that, we'll close for this week.
16. Let's pray: Father, we thank you for these end time lessons. Although we don't fully understand all the meanings and we may be wrong in some of our interpretations, we do know that your Word is True, and however it comes out, it will come out for your glory. Give us insight into these lessons. Not so just that we will understand all the details of how your ultimate glory will prevail, but as reminders for our own lives *today* that despite our present predicaments, you oh God, are sovern. You oh God, are on the throne, and you oh God, have the ultimate victory and you have allowed us to be part of that victory. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.
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Bonus Material – Class Handouts. I got "carried away" this week and made five pages of notes! ☺

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 1 (Page 1 of 5)

Part 1: The Vision of the Four Beasts (Verses 1-10)

Introduction – God uses word-pictures, especially in the prophetic passages of the bible.

- The prophetic text in Daniel is not blunt predictions. God uses word-pictures to describe events.
- Remember these rules-of-interpretation when working with prophetic scripture:
 1. Interpret the Bible with the Bible. The use of idioms are consistent throughout the Bible.
 2. If the plain text makes *perfect* sense, seek no other sense.
If the plain text does not make perfect sense, consider the idea that it is a word-picture.
- We are looking at events that were all futuristic to Daniel. He did not comprehend the meanings.

A Summary of Chapter 7 Part 1 (Verses 1-10):

1. Daniel describes a vision he had “in the first year of King Belshazzar (Verse 1).
 - a) This took place before the events of Chapter 5. Chapters 7-12 are not in chronological order.
2. In this vision, Daniel sees “four great beasts coming out of the sea (Verses 2-7).
 - a) The **1st** beast was like a **lion with eagles wings** > wings plucked off > given man’s heart (Vs. 4).
 - b) The **2nd** beast was like a **bear standing on two legs**; he had 3 ribs in his mouth (Verse 5).
 - c) The **3rd** beast was like a **leopard with 4 heads**; on its back it had 4 bird wings (Verse 6).
 - c) The **4th** beast was “**a terrifying powerful beast**”; it had iron teeth, and 10 horns (Verse 7).
3. Out of the “10 horns” Daniel sees another horn. This horn uprooted 3 of the 10 horns (Verse 8).
4. The vision changes to the throne of God (Verses 9-10).
 - a) God the father is referred to as the “Ancient of Days”
 - b) These verses are full of word-pictures to describe God’s judgment on these 4 beasts.

We’re only covering these 10 verses today. Trying to explain all of this will take up the whole lesson. ☺

How do we know that these are word-pictures are not literal beasts? Because, Daniel says so in Verse 17:

- “The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth.” Daniel 7:17 NIV
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Verse 2: “I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea.”

Question #1 for Verse 2: What do the four winds of heaven represent?

1. The word “wind” in Hebrew is the same root-word where we get the word “Spirit”. It also means breath, as when one breathes. Jesus himself associates the wind with the Holy Spirit.
2. “Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it will go next, so it is with the Spirit. We do not know on whom he will next bestow this life from heaven.” (John 3:8, The Living Bible) Remember, in Hebrew, “wind” and “spirit” are same word.
3. Jesus said, “And he (God) will send his angels and gather his elect (believers) from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. (Mark 13:27, NIV)
4. Then he (God) said to me (Ezekiel), “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.” (In this text, it is a prophecy of the Holy Spirit reviving the dead “bones” of the nation of Israel. (Ezekiel 37:9, NIV)

Answer: The “four winds”, biblically, represent the Spirit of God, “working” (in all 4 directions, i.e., everywhere).

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 1 (Page 2 of 5)

Question #2 for Verse 2: What does The Great Sea represent?

“Probable” Answer #1: “The Great Sea” refers the Mediterranean Sea.

1. In the Book of Numbers, when God is describing the boundaries of the Nation of Israel, he uses “The Great Sea” to refer to the Mediterranean Sea. (Reference: Numbers 34:6-7, as an example.)
This answer is the majority opinion among commentators.

“Possible” Answer #2: It refers to “world-of-people-in general” i.e., “The Gentile Nations”.

2. Then the angel said to me (John), “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. (Revelation 17:15, NIV).

General Comments about the Interpretations of the “Four Beasts”:

Most of the commentaries fall into 1 of 2 categories that I like to call the “classical” and “modern” views.

The “ Classical ” Interpretation Of The 4 Beasts:	The “ Modern ” Interpretation Of The 4 Beasts:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 4 beasts are 4 kingdom/empires. The first 3 are <u>historical to us</u>. The 1st occurred in Daniel’s lifetime. The 2nd –4th are futuristic to Daniel, The 4th has a double-fulfillment in future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 4 beasts are 4 kingdom/empires. The first 3 are futuristic to <u>us as well as Daniel</u>. They have not existed yet, or take place during the “recent” centuries The 4th <u>only</u> occurs in the future.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This view is the most common. Most conservative seminaries say this is correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This view is held by some current popular scholars (e.g., Ray Steadman, David Hocking).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a double-fulfillment possible? Many prophecies in the Bible have double- fulfillments. 	

Daniel 7, Verse 4: “The **first (beast)** was like a **lion**, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it.”

The “ Classical ” Interpretation of Beast #1:	The “ Modern ” Interpretation of the Beast #1:
<u>This “lion” refers to King Nebuchadnezzar:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Daniel Chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar was the “head of gold” in a 4 metal statue vision. The lion is a “king of the beasts” word-picture. The eagle (wings) is the greatest of all birds. “Wings plucked out” would refer to the “seven-cow-years” when he went mad. “Stood like a man” refers to the king’s restoration of power. “He was given new heart” was when he acknowledged God as, “The only God”. ”New Heart” – see also Ezekiel 36:26 His story of rise/fall/rise again is in Chap. 4. 	<u>This is a futuristic Empire (Lead by Britain?)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The British Empire has <u>always</u> had the lion as its symbol. The Babylonian Empire <u>never</u> had the lion as its symbol. “Eagle’s wings plucked off”: American Revolution? America is <u>not</u> part of this future kingdom? (U.S.A. has eagle as symbol). “Heart of a man” – British Empire dissolved. Britain became home of “culture”. Britain is <u>one</u> possible futuristic possibility. This view is <u>future-to-us</u>; therefore details are “fuzzy” as we don’t know the future.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebuttal by “Modernists”: Daniel Verses 11-12 state that this beast will <u>still exist when</u> the 4th beast exist. Babylon Empire didn’t exist at time of Roman Empire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebuttal by “Classics”: The text says that this beast was <u>like</u> a lion. It is not necessary to have an empire with a lion-symbol to interpret this verse.

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 1 (Page 3 of 5)

Daniel 7, Verse 5: "And there before me was a **second beast**, which looked like a **bear**. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'

The " Classical " Interpretation of Beast #2:	The " Modern " Interpretation of the Beast #2:
<p><u>This "bear" refers to Medo-Persian Empire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Medo Persian Empire conquered the Babylonian Empire. "Raised up on side": it "leans"; The Empire was <u>predominantly</u> Medes in beginning with <u>support</u> by Persians A "bear": A bear moves slowly, but does what it wants. The Medo-Persian Army was very large (over 1 million), but slow. "Three ribs": A rib, biblically, is associated with a man. Think of the rib taken from Adam to make Eve (Genesis 2:22). "Three ribs": The Medo-Persian Empire conquered <u>three</u> other major empires that existed at that time: The Babylonian Empire, the Egyptian Empire and the Libyan Empire. 	<p><u>This is a futuristic Empire (Lead by Russia)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Soviet Empire has <u>always</u> had the bear as its symbol. The bear "propped up on one side" may mean <u>it is weak</u>. Russia is not the dominant country it once was militarily. The "Soviet Empire" no longer exists. "Three Ribs" An interpretation is not given. They argue it is something futuristic that we don't know yet. Speculation is that during the 10-king empire described <u>later</u> in Daniel 7 they attack three other kings.

Daniel 7, Verse 6: "After that, I looked, and there before me was **another (3rd) beast**, one that looked like a **leopard**. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.'

The " Classical " Interpretation of Beast #3:	The " Modern " Interpretation of the Beast #3:
<p><u>This "leopard" refers to Greek Empire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Greek Empire conquered the Medo-Persian Empire. A "leopard": A leopard moves very fast. The Greeks, lead by Alexander the Great conquered the "known world" in a few years. "Four wings": After Alexander's death, the Empire was split into four parts. Each "part" lasted for centuries. It was never reunited. 	<p><u>This is a futuristic Empire (???)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernists argue that this kingdom will exist, but opinions vary on who/where. A popular theory is that it is some sort of Arab-based confederation that would grow/spread fast. Because this is futuristic, it is ok to speculate. Modernists study the text, and speculate as to its meaning.

Why is future prophecy so fuzzy? Why can't God be more blunt?

- Satan believes the Bible is the Word of God too. His plan is to stop, or at least delay as long as possible, God's redemptive plan. God keeps the end-time prophecy a little vague as to prevent Satan from understanding how and when all this is to exactly take place.
- God designed the "post-Jesus" history so every generation thinks, "this is it, Jesus is coming back any day now." God designed it that way to keep us on our toes and our focus on Him.
- Jesus said, "(1) Therefore keep watch, because (2) you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. (Matthew 24:42-43, NIV).

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 1 (Page 4 of 5)

Daniel 7, Verse 7: "After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a **fourth beast**--terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.

The " Classical " Interpretation of Beast #4:	The " Modern " Interpretation of the Beast #4:
<p><u>This "beast" refers to Roman Empire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roman Empire conquered now-all-four "mini" Greek Empires. • A "very powerful beast": The Roman Empire was the largest of the world empires. • The Roman Empire peaked about 100 AD when all the land surrounding "The Great Sea" (Mediterranean Sea) was part of the Empire as well as other territories. 	<p><u>This "beast" refers to a Revised Roman Empire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernists look for a revival of the Roman Empire. • They see the European Union as its fulfillment. • The problem is that Daniel's vision of 10 "horns" refer to 10 kings (Daniel 7:24). • Currently there are more than 10 members of the European Union. They see this 4th beast as evolving from the European Union.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many "Classic" teachers <u>also</u> see a Revised Roman Empire as part of the scope of the 4th beast • The "Modern" view teaches that all four beasts "will be around" during the time of the 4th beast. 	

Daniel 7, Verse 8: "'While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was **another horn**, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully."

This "another" horn is the Antichrist. Let's look at Revelation Chap. 13 (The chapter of the "666" verse.)

1. ^{REV 13:1b} And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns (notice that!) and seven heads (we'll get to that next week! ☺), with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ² The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. (Notice the connection!) The dragon (Satan) gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.
2. Continuing in Verse 4: ^{REV 13:4} Men worshiped the dragon (Satan) because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" ^{REV 13:5} The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words (notice the connection between "spoke boastfully" in the last two words of Daniel 7:8 and here.)

Verses 9- 10: No more "beasts: for 2 verses. The scene switches to the throne of God & His judgment.

Daniel 7, Verses 9: "As I (Daniel) looked, "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze."

1. "Thrones": "Surrounding the throne (God's throne) were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. (Rev. 4:4,NIV)
2. "Ancient of Days": This is God the Father. In Verse 13 of this chapter "The Son of Man", a title Jesus himself uses of himself, approaches "The Ancient of Days".
3. "Clothing/hair description": "His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. (Revelation 1:14, NIV) This verse is almost identical to Daniel 7:9.
4. "Wheel's Ablaze": This refers to angels around the throne of God. (See Ezekiel 1:15-21)

Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 1 (Page 5 of 5)

Notes for Verse 9 (cont.)

5. “Head was white as wool”. White is a word-picture for purity.
6. “Bronze Feet”. Bronze and brass are word-pictures for judgment. Brass is purified by fire.

Daniel 7, Verses 10: “A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.”

1. Then I (John) looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. (Revelation 5:5, NIV)
2. “Court was seated/books opened” - Judgment – This is **not** the great judgment of unbelievers.
Most believe it refers to Jesus judging the nations:
 - a. “All the nations will be gathered before him (Jesus), and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’”
 - b. Some see this as the judgment for believers, other see it as a separate judgment for the “nations” as to how they reacted to the Gospel message.

That’s it. If you can handle this, you can do the rest of Daniel!

I want you to put all of these details into perspective:

What is more important is learning how to read and study your Bible:

1. The Bible often uses word-pictures to describe future events.
2. Always interpret Scripture with Scripture, whenever possible.
3. A good tool for Bible studies is a concordance. This is every word in the Bible in alphabetical order, and where those words are located in the Bible. Therefore, if you wanted to study say, “The Four Winds”, you could look for all references to “Four Winds” in a concordance. Also, good Bible software now does the same thing and is much faster!